



The Washington Connection

Congresswoman Candice Miller

<http://candicemiller.house.gov>

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U.S. Representative Candice Miller recently requested a hearing in the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee to examine the near historic low water levels in the Great Lakes. Particularly, Miller has asked the committee to help determine the causes of the low water levels in the Great Lakes and what action can be taken to address the causes and symptoms.

"The Great Lakes are one of the most unique resources on this planet," Miller stated. "Because

remediate this significant problem."



Rep. Miller stands on the shore of Lake St. Clair as water levels reach troubling low levels

of the lower water levels, commercial vehicles are forced to lighten their loads, recreational boaters are coping with inaccessible docks and marines, fish habitats are being dramatically altered and the long term implications remain unclear. I hope that from my seat on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, we can take a comprehensive look at the causes of the low lake levels and how to

Rep. Miller Announces Passport Fairs

Fairs Coincide with Passport Awareness Month

Congresswoman Candice Miller announced that her office and the U.S. Postal Service will be conducting passport fairs on October 13, 2007 and October 20, 2007 throughout Southeast Michigan. The United States Postal Service (USPS) will be offering extended hours at additional off-site locations for citizens to process passport applications and take passport photos. They are a great opportunity for citizens to get their pass-

ports before the implementation of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI). Beginning in 2008, U.S. and Canadian citizens will need to present a WHTI compliant document such as a passport or NEXUS Card or a government-issued photo ID, such as a driver's license, plus proof of citizenship, such as a birth certificate to cross the Canadian Border by land or sea. If you plan on attending, the following items are required when applying for a passport:

- Present Proof of U.S. Citizenship
- Present Proof of Identification
- Check, Credit or Debit Card
- Provide A Social Security number

With Michigan's border state status, the initiative will impact Michiganians much more than other states' residents.

(Continued) Miller requests hearing on low lake levels

this significant problem."

Miller continued, "The Great Lakes play an important role in trade, tourism, and travel and their overall health and well being will have implications far beyond today. One of my principle advocacies since being elected to Congress has been to ensure that our Great Lakes remain vibrant, environmentally sound, and available for generations to come. This hearing will help us get to the crux of the issue our Great Lakes face with the increasingly problematic low water levels."

Congresswoman Miller wrote to Committee Chairman James Oberstar in requesting the hearing.

Several explanations for the decreased water levels have been de-

bated such as recent changes in climate resulting in less precipitation and increased evaporation. Another explanation is the 2005 study released by the Georgian Bay Association which concluded that dredging and mining in the St. Clair River—and subsequent erosion due to these activities—have created a faster-flowing, bigger St. Clair River that is essentially draining Lakes Huron and Michigan. In August, the Association released new figures that indicate billions of gallons of water are being drained from the lakes a day. Congresswoman Miller believes that all possibilities need to be studied so that any remedial actions are based on sound science.



One of Rep. Miller's principle advocacies since being elected to Congress is the protection and preservation of the Great Lakes

(Continued) Passport Fairs to be Held October 13th and 20th throughout Southeast Michigan to assist residents

The following Post Offices will be open special hours to process your passport applications and take your passport photos:

SPECIAL SATURDAY PASSPORT HOURS – Noon – 4:00 pm

October 13th & 20th

Almont, Armada, Bad Axe, Crosswell, Goodells, Harbor Beach, Lapeer, Lexington, Marine City, Marlette, Marysville*, Metamora,**

Mt Clemens (Harrison Twp residents), New Baltimore, Rich-

**mond,
Smiths Creek, Washington**

*** Saturday, October 13th only
** Saturday, October 20th only**

Saturday October 13th & 20th sites with variable hours

**Fair Haven 9:00 am – Noon
Sterling Heights Noon – 3:00 pm**

OFFSITE LOCATIONS

In addition to the locations listed above – the Post Office will also

be processing passports at the following Senior Fairs...

Romeo Senior Center – 361 Morton, Romeo – October 23rd 10:00am – 2:00pm

St. Isidore – 18201 23 Mile Rd., Macomb – October 26th 9:00am – 1:00pm

Article: Rep. Miller to take on Great Lakes levels

by **Bobby Ampezzan**

Port Huron Times Herald staff reporter

In response to low water levels on the Great Lakes, U.S. Rep. Candice Miller, R-Harrison Township, has requested a hearing in the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

At the end of August, Lake Huron was 577 feet and 5 inches deep. It has lost about 5 inches of water since August 2006, and about 3 feet 9 inches of water in the last 10 years. Lake Superior, which feeds Lakes Huron and Michigan about 40% of their water, is 1 foot higher than its lowest recorded depth of 599 feet and 5 inches in 1926.

"It's not just that ... we can't get our boats out, it really has a critical economic factor," Miller said on Tuesday.

Residents of the Great Lakes region comprise one-third of all the registered recreational boat owners in the nation,

and they generate \$4 billion for the commercial and sport fishing industry, according to the Great Lakes Information Network.

Last month, the Lake Carriers Association reported a 5% drop in the weight of cargo shipped by the U.S.-Flag Great Lakes fleet because of low water levels.

Miller said warmer temperatures may be causing more evaporation because the lakes aren't freezing in the winter, but "there are things happening that are man-made that are causing our lake levels to decline," too.

She cited a 2005 study by the Georgian Bay Association in Ontario that concluded dredging and mining in the St. Clair River and the subsequent erosion in the channel has increased the flow of water out of Lake Huron and Lake Michigan.

In 2005, an engineering study conducted by Canadian-based W.F. Baird and Asso-



ciates estimated water loss through the

Low water levels in the Great Lakes are of great concern to many in the region and have impacted tourism and transportation.

channel at 845 million gallons daily. In August, the association said that estimate is closer to 2.5 billion gallons a day.

Miller also pointed to the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, part of the city's wastewater system but where Lake Michigan waters are diverted to the Mississippi river watershed, a fact she thinks leaders should "re-evaluate" in light of recent events.

Article: Water quality bill passes; Bush to veto

By **Bobby Ampezzan**

Port Huron Times Herald staff reporter

Federal legislation that would dedicate millions of dollars to local waterways is awaiting President Bush's approval.

The Water Resources Development Act was passed earlier this week with a four-to-one vote by the U.S. Senate. Among money for other projects affecting the Great Lakes, the act sets aside \$20 million for the implementation of a comprehensive water management plan for the St. Clair River and Lake St. Clair.

The money would be allocated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for a wide range of projects centered on addressing causes of environmental contamination.

U.S. Rep. Candice Miller, R-Harrison Twp., said much of the money would be directed toward high-tech water-monitoring equipment that already has been installed in many area water-treatment plants.

The technology detects toxins and pollutants before they are sucked into local waterworks facilities.

Information about what is detected is shared with other facilities downstream from the plant.

The monitoring project has cost an estimated \$3.2 million to date, said Doug Martz, chairman of the Macomb County Water Quality Board.

Several spills in recent years have troubled area water-resource managers, Martz said. A spill on Feb. 1, 2004, saw about 42,000 gallons of two toxic solvents - methyl ethyl ketone and methyl isobutyl ketone - dumped into the St. Clair River.

Martz, who also sits on the St. Clair River Binational Public Advisory Council, said he would like to see some of the \$20 million directed toward containment of the foreign plant species phragmites (pronounced frag-miltEz), that has invaded area wetlands and coastal lands.

The legislation also calls for a number of other projects related to the region including:

- Paying for creation of an electric barrier at the Chicago Diversionary Canal at Lake Michigan to keep Asian carp out of the Great Lakes.
- Paying for a feasibility study of environmental restoration projects on the Clinton River.

• Directing the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service to control and prevent the spread of viral hemorrhagic septicemia, a deadly fish virus that has spread among populations of muskellunge, whitefish, walleye, perch, and other native Michigan fish species.

The President has threatened to veto the bill, Miller said, but she is confident the legislature has the votes to override a veto.

"(Bush is) saying it's a budget buster ... runaway spending," Miller said.

If the legislation becomes law, a second bill turning the money over to the Army Corps will need to be approved. Miller, whose family owned a marina on the Clinton River and who herself has participated in nearly 30 Port Huron-to-Mackinac Island Sailboat Races, said the economic impact of the area's water resources cannot be overestimated.

"It is literally our identity," she said. "And unfortunately we have not ... been the best stewards of this fantastic global - it's really global - treasure."

The Great Lakes comprise about 20% of the world's fresh surface water.



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Washington Connection Weekly



This Month's Radio Addresses:

10/09—National Breast Cancer Awareness Month

10/11/16—UAW/GM Contract Deal



Rep. Miller speaks to Congress, hails United Auto Workers/General Motors deal

Watch a video of her speech at <http://candicemiller.house.gov>

Madame Speaker, the recent contract negotiated by General Motors and the United Auto Workers was a historic watershed for the domestic auto industry.

By tackling the tough issues of pension reform, job security and, most importantly, health care reform, the industry is now poised to compete and win against foreign competitors.

The domestic auto industry has momentum in moving toward a brighter future. A future that will include high tech alterna-

tive fuel vehicles that will help us reduce our dependence on foreign oil.

I had the opportunity last week to check out one of these vehicles, the Ford Edge powered by lithium ion batteries and a hydrogen fuel cell.

That vehicle uses no gas and its only emission is water.

That is the future if we join the cause. This Congress needs to partner with Ford, General Motors, Chrysler and the UAW to ensure that we produce those automobiles right here in America.

What we should not do is enact draconian fuel economy standards that will stifle innovation, assist our foreign competitors and kill American jobs.

Both management and labor are doing their jobs to strengthen the industry. Now is the time for Congress to step up and do ours. Focus on the future. Focus on technology. And focus on jobs.